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spoke in the debate, but asked, in the name of common sense, how if the motion was carried, it was to be given to it. Was India to run every five or six millions into debt or would the taxpayers of Great Britain take the burden upon their shoulders? Sir Joseph PEARCE, interposing, stated that he was prepared to assure the people of India of an annual grant for the purpose of meeting the deficit. Mr. SMITH, very naturally, retorted by asking why he did not make this proposal in the first instance, and proceed with his motion concerning the traffic afterwards. Sir Joseph replied that he was quite prepared to add such a proposal to his resolution, but apparently declined to withdraw the latter. A division was taken with the result already recorded. Upon this Sir E. PEARCE moved to add to the end of the resolution: "And this House, feeling the pressure of taxation on the people of India, will take steps to reimburse the deficiency caused to the Indian Government." Before a discussion on this amendment could take place the clock struck one, and the House went home to bed, not in a highly virtuous frame of mind, but in the majority of which, that is.

The next day, in question time, Mr. SMITH was asked by Mr. M. CAMERON whether in view of the results of this division the Government were prepared to give effect to a proposal by Mr. CAMERON, had made in the course of the debate, for the appointment of a Royal Commission, to enquire into the whole question and supply the House with authentic data, which might guide its legislative action. Mr. SMITH replied that he considered the debate to have been incomplete. Sir J. PEARCE had, he understood, expressed his willingness to accept the proposed addition—amendment of India by England—but on the actual motion for such reimbursement the debate stood adjourned. At this point the Speaker, in answer to Lord HARTINGTON, explained the actual position of affairs. The original motion on the evening before had been: "That the Speaker do now leave the chair." To this Sir J. PEARCE had moved an amendment proposing to leave out all the words after the initial "that," and substitute for them the words of his motion concerning the opium traffic. This amendment was carried, but the carrying of it merely amounted to making the resolution of Sir J. PEARCE, the substantive motion. In other words, all that the Commons did on the 10th April was to express their willingness to discuss Sir J. PEARCE's bid. They might have declined to hear him altogether; as it was, the majority of them consented to treat him and his bid seriously. For the moment nothing further could be done unless the Government would agree to give Sir J. PEARCE's motion, with Sir E. PEARCE's amendment or addendum, a place on some Government night. This Mr. SMITH was not prepared at the time to do, although he expressed the general view of the Government, in which all reasonable men will agree, "that the question requires much further consideration before it is accepted by the House."

Although Mr. SMITH has since informed us that Sir J. PEARCE does not intend to proceed further with his motion at present, it is not at all likely that the opinion succeeded in setting what they will, with considerable reason, regard as a victory, they will push forward their ill-timed and mischievous agitation. Mischievous, because, as Mr. CAMERON, the illustrious supporter of Sir J. PEARCE, observed, "whenever the House, out of a mistaken notion of goodness, and of benefiting the people of India or of a Crown Colony, had attempted to interfere without having a thorough knowledge of the circumstances under which the people lived, the result had been that they had done harm instead of good." To this dictum, obviously based on the action of the Home Government with regard to the O. D. Ordinance here and elsewhere, every colonist will cordially assent. It is, however, because, as Sir J. PEARCE, speaking on behalf of the Secretary of State for India, told the House, "that Indian Government have never denied that this source of revenue should be abolished as soon as it could be brought about without detriment to the affairs of the country." Some progress has already been made: there are now 100,000 acres less of land under poppy cultivation in Bengal than there were ten years ago, while the number of chests of opium manufactured in British India was only 4,800 as against 5,600. The revenue of India had largely increased during the past five years, and little by little the opium traffic would be put an end to. Why are not the fiduciaries content to wait? Formerly their cry was, "Justice to China; even now they revive the absurd statement that opium was forced upon China at the point of the bayonet. But they cannot deny that at the present moment, to use the words of Sir E. PEARCE, "China is (practically) perfectly free to impose any tax she pleases on Indian opium, which is in fact at her mercy." Then as regards the people of India. Their "national conscience," as the Times points out, is not offended by their state in the traffic; on the other hand they do consider themselves very seriously overtaxed, and are quite unprepared to pay further taxes in place of those paid for them by the Chinese opium dealer. The sole element to consider is the national conscience of England. Far be it from us to deny this in any way; it is better that it should hurry us into hasty, even mistaken, legislation than that we should allow it to be lulled and blunted. There is no question, and we should all of us rejoice in the fact, that the national conscience has grown, is growing, more tender. A century and a half ago a proposal to free all slaves would have been met with derision; fifty years later a bare majority in the Commons consented to abolish, and slavery, and the slave trade, another forty years and the country agreed to spend twenty millions sterling for the purpose of freeing all British owned slaves. Could it be shown that the opium traffic stood on the same footing as slavery nothing of course should be allowed to stand in the way of its abolition—always provided that we were the burden ourselves and did not lay it upon others. But it cannot be shown. It is nonsense to say that India is poisoning China, it is equally

nonsense to say that China is poisoning India. Of all observers missionaries are in this regard the least trustworthy; not through any mala fides on their part, but because they almost invariably see only one side of the subject, and that the worst. They have established in connection with most of their missions, hospitals, and in so doing deserve the praise and support of their fellow residents. To these hospitals they naturally look for means of support, and the hospitals provide them with subjects taken from the lowest grades of misery. If there be an "opium devil" in the neighborhood whose home his friends wish to reclaim, or who in some moment of passionate wishes to reclaim himself, he will come sooner or later to the hospital. His cure will be noted, and set down to the debit of the opium traffic. At the same time, the best of missionaries are but human, it is easy to fasten for any ill success on the only one of many calamities brought against foreigners from which missionaries are entirely and obviously free. "If no opium were brought to China, we should succeed," they murmur. But they take little thought of other and far more powerful hindrances to their good work, as (to speak of one only) their persistent attitude towards what they persist in calling "Ancestral Worship." Unfortunately in England the missionary is seen of an audience where the China merchant would not be heard, and sensational stories of the rare abuse of opium, find eager acceptance, while scanty attention is paid to reiterated proofs of the positive benefit which in so many cases springs from moderate use of the drug.

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also to be met with. Several companies have been formed to work the opium mines, and the Government has a large interest in them. So far of course the work has been little more than that of preparation. What the work really will be, we can only say. It is much the same with the country. Surveys have been made and reports prepared, but I have not seen any specimens and I do not think, as yet, any companies have been formed for working the mines.

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